

HISTORY of Nathan O. Robinson

Written by Abby K. Robinson Gooch

This is Sunday afternoon July 13, 1941; just one month today since dear Nate passed away, seems like months. How the days and nights drag since he left us. Only those who have parted with one so dear and true as he was, can even begin to imagine my loneliness, but God has been good to me, he has blessed me with a testimony of the Gospel and with children who are kind and good to me.

I would like to write what I can of Nate's life, which I'm afraid will not be very much. He was the son of Nathan Benjamin Robinson and Annis Adelia Bybee. He was born in Mountain Green, Weber Co., Utah (which is somewhere around Ogden, Utah) on March 8, 1874.

Of his early life I know very little prior to the time his father was killed by the Indians. This happened when he was about 8 years old. I have heard him tell it many times. He was just at the age where it was impressed upon his mind very vividly. As I recall, they were living at or near Snowflake, Arizona. His mother had 4 little children, Nate being the oldest, and she was expecting a visit from the old stork. I will relate the story as he told it many times.

His father left one day to look for a colt, which had a young calf. He expected to be back by evening or sooner, but did not return. Naturally, his mother became very worried. Nate said he could remember his mother pacing the yard, wringing her hands.

Now and then the Indians would give them trouble, and she had a feeling within herself that something was wrong. Later in the evening, they were notified that the Indians were on the warpath. Terror filled her heart. Women and children were gathered together to be given protection. At the same time, men were out searching for his [Nathan's] father, but in vain. They searched and searched.

Finally, they found part of his clothing stained with blood. They finally decided he had been killed, and a group of men holding the Priesthood was called to have prayer. They earnestly plead with their Heavenly Father that they might find his body. After prayer, they decided to separate and search in two groups, and if the body was found they were to fire a gun.

Shortly after they separated, one of the men turned and walked along the edge of a deep creek, and suddenly deep in the clear blue water he saw a foot rise, and then lower into the water. Immediately, he fired his gun, and the men all came. They at once decided his body must be in the creek. One man volunteered to go into the water and

see. There in the bottom of the creek, with his hands and feet tied and weighted down with rocks, was his father's body. God had heard the prayers of loved ones and friends.

Oh how grateful we should be to have the Priesthood of God, and faith in His power. Why do we ever doubt? Nate often said that was one of the greatest testimonies of prayer to him.

Two weeks after his father's death, another little boy came to live with them. They named him Phileon. Two years later, his mother married a man by the name of Peter Skousen. By him she had 9 more children, making her the mother of 14. One of them died in infancy. Her daughter May, Nate's own sister, died after she married and became a mother. Following are the names of his brothers and sisters who are living; Laura Robinson Skousen, (she married her stepfather's brother); David, and Phileon Robinson. The following are his half brothers and sisters: Zeb, Don, Verna S. Smith, Effie S. Duke, Eva S. Folsom, Hazel S. LaBaron, Marie S. Earl, and Merl S. Lesuer. I do not know how old he was when they moved to Mexico where they could live their lives and not be molested, as his stepfather had two wives, and they were not permitted to live with them in the USA.

Perhaps it would be interesting to those who read this to know that when Peter married Nate's mother, he had never been married, but Nate's mother had been sealed to his father Nathan Benjamin, and realizing that Peter would be alone after death, she insisted he marry someone who would be his in the life to come. So he married them both the same day, the woman he married first, through Nate's mother's insistence, was Mary Rogers, and she is still living in Old Mexico, his stepfather having passed away a year ago. I think we must admit that it took a lot of courage to even suggest, let alone insist on an act of that kind, I think a very unselfish act.

Of his life in old Mexico, I know very little, I have heard him tell of the hardships, and of the good times he had. He always spoke very respectfully of his stepdad, as he called him, but said he was very strict with him. The large family they had, and hard times deprived him of a high school education, and he felt it all through his life. However, he did have the privilege of going on a mission to the Southern States in his late twenties. I don't remember his exact age. However, after developing a tumor on his neck, it became necessary to release him after 18 months. He was sent to Salt Lake City and had it removed. He carried the scar all his life.

Sometime after returning home, he married Clarissa Brienholt, a young girl whom he went with before going on his mission. Of their married life, I know very little, only I do know he loved her very dearly, and their 17 years together were happy years. While living in Mexico, they had 4 children, Clara, Anna, Nathan, and Lenore. When Clara was a baby, Nate was doing construction work at Ciudad Juarez, Old Mexico, a little Mexican town bordering El Paso, Texas. While on that job, he was foreman over a group of Mexican laborers. Many a time I've heard him tell how once he narrowly escaped death

while dynamiting. He was blown 15 to 20 feet in the air, told of the peculiar feeling he had coming down surrounded by flying rocks and gravel. When he landed, thanks to Providence, he landed on his feet. How surprised they all were that he was alive. Such experiences as those are a testimony of God's care and protection. While Lenore was still young, they moved to Canada and went into the farming business. Just how many years they stayed there, we do not know, but I think it could not have been many years, for they moved to Idaho about 1915 or 1916.

He worked at Lincoln, Idaho in the Sugar factory, just one winter I believe. At any rate, in the spring of 1917, he moved to Pocatello on a farm north of Pocatello. Clarissa was expecting a little new comer in July, so he moved her in town in a house on Taft Ave, in what was then called North Pocatello, but is now called Alameda. They were all thrilled and looked forward to the advent, but it seemed it was not to be for the wee sweet baby girl only lived a few hours, and was called back home from which its little spirit came. They blessed her, and gave her the name of Beth. Clarissa was not doing well. The Elders were called in, and faith exercised in her behalf, but alas, 10 days later she too was called home to join her baby, leaving Nate and children heartbroken and sad. The children were not babies. Clara was 15 and Lenore, the youngest, was 8. Clarissa's brothers and sister from Utah offered to take the children home for the winter, and Nate stayed with his sister Eva for the winter. When the children came back in the spring, he had made a payment on a home, and told the girls if they would keep the house up and do their part, he would buy it, but the girls seemed to take no interest in it. He said they had never been given enough responsibility to know how to assume it, so they didn't keep it long.

At this time I was living in Ammon, Idaho with my 3 children, Kenyon 8, Loie 6, and Ellafair 5. I had been a widow 6 years, Ellafair having been born 3 months after her daddy was killed.

In July 1918, a year after Clarissa passed away, while Nate was working on an elevator in Ammon, he was informed that Lulu, my sister, lived there. He decided he'd he'd look her up. They had been young people together so he did. Naturally she brought him to see me. I shall never forget that evening. I had never seen him since I was a youngster as he was 14 years my senior. Lulu said "do you know who this is?" And to their surprise I told them it was Nate Robinson. But I didn't tell them what I thought at that time. The moment I saw him I marveled at his kind face and thought, "there's a man I'm sure anyone could love," the first one I had seen since dear Burrell had left me, 6 years previous. He had four children, all older than mine....well, we married. This was in 1918, and we lived in Pocatello.

There isn't room or a desire to tell of all the problems we had. It is no easy matter to mix two families. Nate and I had four children born to us. Burrell Oscar, Sept 1, 1919... Lorin Eugene, Dec. 1920.....Ilene, 29 Jan, 1922.....Don Leslie, 1 Dec. 1923. Nate was 14 years older than myself, but we truly loved each other. He was not very well as he had

asthma. He was always loving and kind to my children and we all loved him. He was the only father my children really ever knew.

Years have a way of slipping by and the family grew up and married and had children of their own. In June of 1941, Nate, who hadn't been well for years, had a stroke while he was at work. He was a railroad brakeman and he was stricken on the train between Pocatello and Montpelier Idaho. They took him off the train at Montpelier and called me. Again death parted me from my beloved partner and left me alone to face hard and fearful years, but how I loved and appreciated those few 23 wonderful years we had together.

He was not a man of worldly goods and riches, but the treasures he laid up were those of eternal worth; his service to his friends and neighbors, and undying love, devotion and service to all his family.